

*A Short Answer to a Large Paper,* 405 610

INTITULED,

*A Continuation of Brief and Modest Reflections, &c.*

**O**UR busy Author, having had a good happ of 3 or 4 hours time to write, upon the 5th day, the day after the Parliament had entred into a most happy Revolution-Resolve, concerning the Security of Religion and Liberty: he retired labouring under an overflow of the Gall, and mingling Choler with his Ink, squirts it at random upon this larger Paper, called, *A Continuation of his Reflections for Indulgence, &c.* Wherein he makes many a sad Blot and Blunder, too many to be here mentioned, but which every Reader must see and be amazed at upon the first reading; so that the best Answer is, to propagate a Paper that fully answers and exposes it self: For if a Madman will spit against the Sky, the drivel must fall back upon his own Face.

He begins with his former *Plan of the State of the Nation*, wherein every thing is most grossly mistated. His 400 *Subscriptions in Glasgow* is answered by a Defiance to name above 3 or 4 Families in the whole Town, that absented from Church upon Episcopal Principles: and the *prime Inhabitants* so affected, are known to be the very profligate Scum of that Town, a very few excepted. And as for the Towns and Shires of the North, how oft shall this incontestable Truth be told him, That the People in the North were in profound quiet; That they did and do generally join with the established Worship; That they seek no Toleration; That nothing hath produced a show of Disaffection or Dissatisfaction among them, but the late factious Trafficking of some Men, who manifestly drive at further Designs.

Next he comes to *Tenets*, That the *Presbyterians beg'd and preach'd up Indulgence*, which is false; and so all that is built upon it, throw the Paper, falls to the Ground. It was granted unsought, tho' never by an Act of Parliament, and some of the Presbyterians thought they had reason to improve it: As he who has a good Title to an Estate, takes a Pension without renouncing his Right to the whole: But it is well known, that Toleration was never beg'd nor preach'd up by Presbyterians in the hardest Times.

The Author, mild Man, justifies not the Severities of those Times, no, he condemns them, he owns them not, pag. 4. yet he discovers a mighty liquorish Tooth towards them. For, says he, produce me one Sentence, where one person was condemn'd, but on what was Treason and Lese Majesty by Law, and by Law now as well as then; and I shall pay the Clerk and 40 lib. besides. Now, thought I, if he be a Gentleman who writes this, the Loss he hath not affixed his Name, for then should I, saving him Clerks Fees, have gain'd some Hundreds of 40 Pounds, by laying before him the 18. Act of the 2d Sess. of K. W's Parl. 4 July 1690.

But then I began to consider, that I should lose my Pains; for this Writer is certainly some antiquated Politician, that had wont oraculously to dictate, who has been many Years asleep, and now being awak'ned and his Head giddy by reason of some elevation, would turn Frappish and rake it mightily in Dudgeon, if his Maggots be not entertained just as he vents them. And therefore 'tis e'ne best to let him alone to risk the Reputation of his Brain by the angry Nonsense of page 5; and to endanger the safety of his Head by impeaching the Claim of Right pag. 9. as if the several Articles thereof were not of equal force, and such of them as do not please our Author, may be not only touch'd but cut off. Which, if true, and if the one half of the Nation be Episcopal as he reckons, then the other half (and perhaps a good part of the Episcopal half too) are yet under the Condemnation of the Law, according to his Position, That what was Treason by Law then, is so by Law now. I doubt not but the Parliament will so far advert to their own and the Nation's Security (I say not to call this Author to account, tho they knew him but) to declare it Treason to impugn the Revolution or Claim of Right, and to consider how well Men of these Principles do merit a Toleration, & in what the granting of it to them must issue. Especially considering, that these of the National establish'd Government and Worship are still in their Stile a certain Sect and Sort of People, page 12. and the late Prelate *Person*, notwithstanding the Laws abolishing Prelacy, is still with them, the present Arch-bishop of Glasgow, page 11.

Our Author's Invention being drain'd of Balmy Anodine Arguments, he falls a nibbling at some Prints against Toleration, the Writers of which, if they have leisure, may soon give him a rapp over the Fingers for his pains; yea most of what he says or hints, is solidly answered already

already, in the Appendix to the second Edition of the *Gentleman's Letter*, in Answer to *The Case*, &c. But he has cast his Thoughts (if he had any at all, beside Salles of impotent Passion) so awkwardly and illogically into *Quere's*, *Ergo's* and *Confirmatur's*, that a Man must be very idle to spend time in diverting himself with such stuff. I only notice the strange Ground he lays for a Toleration, *pag. 6.* at the close. Some Men desire a Toleration; *Ergo* they should have it. If I hit not his Meaning, I crave his pardon; for I can find no other Meaning in what he says. Now I ever thought, Toleration had been the *Gentle Balm* and *Anodine* of tender Consciences, and not the Gratification of irregular Desires, to increase their Irregularity. And I was ever perswaded (and I hope the Parliament is so) that no wise State ever thought it Prudence to give a Toleration to these who can, without hurting their Consciences, comply and join with the National Establishment; of which the Episcopalians have given such practical and professional Demonstration, that it might make *the Man who laugh'd but once, laugh again*, to see how they wriggle and mumble upon this point. I shall be far from saying, That the Presbyterians are all Saints, or the Episcopalians all Devils, there are good and bad on both sides: But I'm confident he who says, a *Scots* Episcopal Conscience is straitned in joining with Presbyterian Worship, or that Presbyterians can desire Toleration for any other end, but either to weaken and o'return the Establishment by the Revolution, or to give loose Reins to all manner of Licentiousness, may after that, say or unsay what he will.

As our Author does every where mistake and misrepresent the Case, which has nothing to do with the abstract Question about Toleration to truly tender Consciences: And as for the Ministers, they are under no manner of Penalty (*pag. 6.*) but the *lucrum cessans* of wanting their Stipends, which our Author (as was hinted in the *Short Answer*) if he be a Man of Influence, may remedy or compensate, by procuring *just Maintenance* for them, at a cheaper rate than that of imbroiling a Nation. So he does most disingenuously insinuate, *pag. 9.* That to oppose Toleration is to quarrel *the Queens maintaining of any in what they enjoy according to Law*, and what is enacted by the Parliament Anno 1695. is not the Protection of that Act given in favours of these who are duly qualified, and who are in possession? and who doth molest them?

But what is this to the Toleration crav'd for these who are not in possession, and that without any Qualification at all?

The Draught now presented to the Parliament, differs little from the Printed Draught, with Remarks to which I refer. I shall only observe upon it,

1. It pretends Ease to Protestant Subjects, as if we had as many Sects and Parties of them, as England or Holland; whereas it's manifest, the Prelatists only, and such of them as are Jacobites, are intended, to undermine the Revolution, and be a Reserve for the happy Days in prospect.

2. They are to give no Test either of Orthodoxy or Loyalty; and how shall it be known that they are Protestants and not Incendiaries? Or doth any State on Earth Tolerat People, whose Principles they know not, and who do not Qualifie themselves to the Civil Government?

3. It shall be lawful for them to assemble with their Ministers for Divine Worship, in any Houses they shall appoint for these Religious Exercises in all Towns and Parishes in this Kingdom. Now I suppose the Quakers, who call themselves Protestants and have their Ministers too, should come to be the majority of a Parish, and that Parish fall vacant, and William Penn their Advocat, might he not by this Act tell them, Dear Friends, The Church is but a Steeple house, and now it is empty, let us enter and take possession in behalf of Friends, to keep out Hirelings and Baal's Priests; for here is a Law authorizing us so to do. And may not an Episcopal Heretor or two, wisely make the same Improvement, in any Town or Parish, of such a Toleration.

4. All Disturbers of their Persons, or the full exercise of their Ministerial Function, and Meetings, are to be Punished by the Privy Council, and other Judges competent. What Work must this make in some places? But the Seditious and Disturbing Doctrines of the Tolerated, are to be Punished by the Privy Council only. To which I shall only say, that if Her Majesty and the Council, were as much Presbyterian now as K. Charles and his Council were Episcopal, both the Toleration and the Terms of it might be offered with a better Grace.

To conclude, I cannot but notice a Learned Reply given by our hasty angry Author page 6. in these Words, *The 2d there is answered by NO.* And whereas he promises more, page 10, by the next occasion. I must take leave to tell him, That unless what he further says give a fairer state of the Case, and be supported by better, at least more intelligible, Arguments, all the raw Nonsensical Stuff he can further Print, shall be answered after the shortest manner, by NO. As we can have no fear but that the high Court of Parliament, will answer all the Models of his Toleration, let him turn it into as many Proteus-shapes as he will, by a Wise, Safe and true Protestant NO.

